



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 1037-2003, **Version:** A

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Proposed Res. No. 1037-A

Resolution urging the Senate to pass and the Governor to sign the Voting Systems Standards Act of 2003 (A.8847), a bill that would implement certain mandates of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 and amend the election law in New York State by, among other things, establishing new standards for voting machines, ensuring access to the ballot by voters with disabilities, adopting a single state-wide voting machine through a competitive bidding process and requiring a voter verifiable audit trail.

By Council Members Perkins, Comrie, Foster, Jackson, Quinn, Reed, Rivera, Sanders, Seabrook and Yassky.

Whereas, The 2000 presidential elections and the subsequent vote recount ignited scrutiny of the adequacy of voting standards throughout the nation and precipitated voluminous discussion on a wide range of topics, including voter access to polls, registration and registration roll issues, voter discrimination and lost vote rates; and

Whereas, Two of the highest lost vote rates in the nation during the 2000 elections were 4.4% in Miami-Dade County, Florida and 4.0% in Brooklyn, NY; and

Whereas, New York City is in need of electoral reform because of its troubling voting history requiring three of its five counties to be subject to preclearance under the Voting Rights Act due to historical discrimination against black and Latino and other minority voters; and

Whereas, Voters with disabilities have been systematically denied their fundamental constitutional right to vote because the State's poorly designed voting machinery has been unable to accommodate their specialized needs; and

Whereas, Newer technologies exist to accommodate voters with disabilities in wheelchairs or with other certain mobility impairments, the blind or those with other visual impairments, and those with hand/arm impairments, namely, audio prompt voting features, hand-held voting devices and sip-and-puff mechanisms; and

Whereas, To respond to this antiquated, dilapidated and, within certain areas, discriminatory state of the voting process within the nation, Congress passed the Help America Vote Act of 2002 ("HAVA"), which was promoted as a bi-partisan election reform package; and

Whereas, Assembly Member Keith Wright introduced the Voting Systems Standards Act of 2003 (A.8847), a bill that would implement certain mandates of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 and amend the election law in New York State; and

Whereas, The Voting Systems Standards Act of 2003, among other things, establishes new standards for voting machines, ensures access to the ballot by voters with disabilities, adopts a single state-wide voting machine through a competitive bidding process and requires a voter verifiable audit trail; and

Whereas, The New York State Assembly passed the Voting Systems Standards Act of 2003 on June 17, 2003, whereupon it was delivered to the Senate; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the Senate to pass and the Governor to sign the Voting Systems Standards Act of 2003 (A.8847), a bill that would implement certain mandates of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 and amend the election law in New York State by, among other things, establishing new standards for voting machines, ensuring access to the ballot by voters with disabilities, adopting a single state-wide voting machine through a competitive bidding process and requiring a voter verifiable audit trail.

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